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Articles in Today's Clips

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

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Mother gets 20-30 years for suffocating daughter,

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FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

By Paul Janczewski

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A mother who suffocated her 2-year-old daughter and left the body in a kitchen cupboard will be remembered for her "legacy of irresponsibility" toward her children, a judge said Monday.

Brenda S. Drayton, 31, of Flint was sentenced to 20-30 years in prison Monday in the 2004 death of her daughter, Lyah. She had told police and mental health authorities that she was suffocating the child of Satan.

Genesee Circuit Judge Richard B. Yuille said Drayton compounded the death by leaving her daughter's body in a cupboard, "her favorite hiding spot," and then letting her young son find the corpse.

"You've left him with one horrible memory," Yuille told Drayton.

After reading Drayton's presentence report, Yuille said she had "significant limitations" that affected her life.

But, Yuille said Drayton has shown no responsibility to any of her children, all of whom have been taken away and placed elsewhere.

Before sentencing, Lucy Murray, Drayton's mother, asked Yuille to give her daughter the mental health help she needed.

"Prison is going to make her worse," she said.

Drayton was sentenced after entering a plea of guilty but mentally ill to second-degree murder.

The incident occurred about 8 p.m. Nov. 29, 2004, at her residence, 1826 Mabel Ave.

In earlier hearings, witnesses said Drayton grabbed the child by the neck and held her face down on a bed after the child objected to taking a nap and swore at her.

"I wasn't in my right mind," Drayton told Yuille when entering her plea.

At an earlier hearing, a pathologist said Lyah died from asphyxiation from being held down by her throat, neck, chest and back while a pillow covered her face.

The child was found in the cupboard by her brother, 12, shortly after the assault, police said.

Forensic officials found Drayton criminally responsible for her actions, even though she was diagnosed as bipolar, suffering from psychotic episodes, mood disorders, hallucinations and is mildly retarded. She has an IQ of 55, forensic officials said.

Assistant Genesee County Prosecutor Jennifer McKellar told Yuille that police reports indicated Drayton's residence to be in "horrific" condition; there was no food, and it was littered with trash.

She urged Yuille to give Drayton the maximum sentence, saying "we have to protect our children."

After the incident, the state Family Independence Agency removed Drayton's son from the home under a temporary court order. Another child born since the incident also has been taken, officials said.

Drayton told Yuille that she loved her daughter and was sorry.

"I need help," she said.

Man to face trial in death of baby

Accused backs out of plea agreement

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

By Scott Hagen
shagen@citpat.com -- 768-4929

A Jackson man accused of shaking a baby to death backed out of a plea agreement this morning and instead will gamble with a possible trial.

David Monroe, 25, agreed earlier to plead guilty to second-degree murder and first-degree child abuse.

Prosecutors and police said Monroe lifted 4-week-old Jaylan Romer from her crib in April and shook her to death because she was crying.

"My client does not want to plea," Monroe's attorney, Jerry Engle, told Circuit Judge Charles Nelson today. Engle declined to comment afterward.

Prosecutors agreed to drop a count of felony murder, which carries a possible life sentence, in exchange for the plea.

The terms of their sentencing agreement with Monroe weren't clear, although second-degree murder carries a maximum sentence of life in prison.

Prosecutors couldn't be reached for comment after this morning's hearing.

Tomi Romer, Jaylan's mother, buried her tear-soaked face in her hands even before Monroe's case was called. She sobbed and ran from the court upon learning that there would be no plea agreement.

She declined to comment.

Monroe had waived his preliminary examination in District Court under the presumption that he would plead guilty in Circuit Court

Instead, Nelson returned the trial to District Court for the preliminary examination. There, prosecutors must present enough evidence to send the case to a trial.

No date has been set for the preliminary examination.

Parents Charged With Infant Abuse

By Mary Conway

Web produced by Sarah Morgan

July 18, 2006

Jacob was 4-weeks-old when he was taken to the hospital with severe injuries. Tuesday he remained in critical condition, his parents charged with child abuse.

29-year-old Andre Wilson and his wife, 28-year-old Jamila Wilson, admitted they were in the Warren home the night the abuse allegedly occurred and said the baby awoke a several times during the night.

Both have been charged with first degree child abuse and face 15 years in prison.

Warren Police Det. Kenneth Marsee said, "There's five rib fractures, a fracture to the upper leg bone as well as the upper arm bone, detached retina and severe brain trauma. So collectively those can only be, according to the doctors, no accidental injuries."

According to the doctors, the brain trauma is so severe they don't know how well Jacob, now 6-weeks-old, will recover.

As part of their bond, the parents are not allowed to visit their child. Their attorney says there was never any abuse, but he did not say what might have happened.

Parents blamed for baby's broken bones

Infant son in critical condition with brain trauma

PUBLISHED: July 18, 2006

By Norb Franz
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

A Warren couple is accused of causing the injuries -- including several broken bones -- that have left their infant son in critical condition.

Andre Wilson, 30, and his wife Jamila, 28, were arraigned Monday on a charge of first-degree child abuse in a case involving their only child, Jacob Wilson.

Warren detectives said the boy was in the care and custody of his parents when they brought him to Henry Ford Medical Center in Sterling Heights on July 1, when Jacob was 4 weeks old. The infant was taken by ambulance to William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak for severe brain trauma, fractures of his upper left arm, upper left leg and five ribs, and a detached left retina, police said.

Doctors conducted a procedure to relieve pressure on Jacob's brain and said the injuries were the result of assault and Shaken Baby Syndrome, police said.

The attorney representing the accused couple challenged that medical assessment, calling it "dead wrong."

"And when I say dead wrong, I mean dead wrong," attorney Elbert Hatchett said. "There was never any abuse. They would never do anything to harm this child."

At the couple's arraignment before 37th District Judge Walter Jakubowski, Hatchett claimed the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office acted in a retaliatory "and somewhat vindictive" manner by charging both parents because he previously advised his clients to not talk to investigators. When Hatchett requested the judge set a personal bond for the accused mother and father, the judge cut him off.

During a heated exchange, Jakubowski told Hatchett, "I've heard enough ... If you want to argue the case, you wait till trial."

Jakubowski set bond for each parent at \$25,000 cash or surety and prohibited them from having any contact with their son. That order prompted tears from Jamila Wilson.

A preliminary hearing in the case is scheduled for July 27.

When asked by a reporter about the cause of Jacob's injuries, Hatchett said he could not speculate.

Jacob's condition has stabilized, but he remains in the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit.

First-degree child abuse is a felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

Family members of the accused couple described Andre and Jamila Wilson as doting new parents who married almost a year ago.

"My faith and confidence is they'll both be exonerated," said the Rev. Andrew Wilson, Jacob's paternal grandfather.

"They love their baby," said Diane Wilson, Andre Wilson's mother. Mrs. Wilson, who described herself as a registered nurse, said her son and daughter-in-law emphasized to relatives the proper way to hold an infant, and to wash their own hands before doing so.

Relatives said the couple met approximately 12 years ago at Word of Faith Christian Center in Southfield. Andre Wilson holds a degree in theology and assists his father at River of Life Ministries in Pontiac. He formerly worked as a manager at Wal-Mart and is currently employed by Consumers Energy, Hatchett said.

Jamila Wilson works for the American Red Cross on blood drives.

Neither she nor her husband has a prior criminal record, their attorney said. Both turned themselves in to police Monday when advised that prosecutors had authorized the charge.

While child abuse cases are not rare to Warren detectives, investigators said the nature of Jacob's injuries to a child his age are particularly disturbing.

Macomb County Prosecutor Eric Smith could not be reached for comment.

Guilty plea cancels CSC trial

BH man faces prison; children he is accused of abusing avoid testifying

By SARAH Mc EVILLY
H-P Staff Writer

7/18/06

ST. JOSEPH — A Benton Harbor man accused of sexually assaulting five children over the course of five years pleaded guilty Monday to one count of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, thereby avoiding a trial and testimony by children.

Under a deal with prosecutors, the other eight CSC charges against Dontae Lashun Wiley Sr., 29, were dropped, Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Patricia Ceresa said.

Wiley's trial had been scheduled to begin today. He is in the Berrien County Jail awaiting an Aug. 28 sentencing. First-degree CSC is punishable by up to life in prison.

"We're pretty happy with that," Ceresa said of the plea agreement.

Ceresa said the families and lawyers all agreed over terms of the plea.

"It saves the children having to testify," she said.

Wiley's lawyer, Ernest White, could not be reached Monday for comment.

Wiley, of 1129 Pavone St., was charged in March with eight counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct (penetration) involving four children under the age of 13 and one count of third-degree criminal sexual conduct (penetration) involving a child between the ages of 13 and 15.

The sexual assaults allegedly occurred from January 2000 through November 2005 at two residences in Benton Harbor and one in Coloma where Wiley and his wife lived. The prosecution has said the five children are either related to or acquainted with Wiley.

Wiley's wife operated a day care center from one of the Benton Harbor houses, which prosecutors have said left the potential for more victims. Ceresa did not want to discuss that issue during a phone interview Monday.

At a preliminary hearing March 14, the five children recounted how Wiley had allegedly raped them or forced them to have oral sex with him. Many said Wiley had forced them to smoke cigarettes and threatened to kill them or their mother if they told anyone about the abuse.

One child, a 9-year-old boy, said during the hearing he was no longer afraid to tell someone because Wiley was in jail.

Wiley's wife, Teyshana Wiley, testified during the hearing that she and Wiley had been separated since November and are going through a divorce. It was Feb. 12, she said, when one of the children told her of the sexual abuse after listening to a church sermon about truth.

Police arrested Wiley, 28 at the time, on March 2 as he was driving on Michigan 139.

July 18, 2006

Judge off-course

I was saddened by Judge Richard Garcia's comments about the Angel House shelter (July 9). As an employee of the Ingham County juvenile court in the 1960s, I was part of an effort that opened a shelter for abused and neglected children. I am proud of that, and even prouder that about 20 years ago the program was closed because even better ones were developed.

Research by The Annie E. Casey Foundation confirms better, more cost effective methods exist. Garcia's comment, "I guarantee you that place will be full," would accomplish only one thing - the financial success of a private agency program.

At \$120 a day per child for 10 children, the cost of keeping Angel House full for one year is \$438,000 - for services that are, at best, no better than those already being provided for a fraction of the cost.

David Mills
Mason

AP News: General News 7/18/06

Psychiatrist says examples show Andrea Yates knew drownings were wrong

By ANGELA K. BROWN
Associated Press Writer

HOUSTON (AP) - Andrea Yates was so ashamed after drowning her five children in the bathtub that she avoided her distraught husband when he arrived home, just one of many signs that she knew the killings were wrong, a forensic psychiatrist testified Monday.

Dr. Michael Welner, who evaluated Yates for two days in May, told jurors that Yates said she called 911 because she wanted police to arrive before her mother-in-law did so the older woman wouldn't see what she had done. Yates said she also wanted officers to break the news to her husband - although she had called him and asked him to come home, Welner said.

'You're not ashamed of doing something you think is right,' said Welner, testifying for the prosecution in its rebuttal phase of Yates' second capital murder trial.

Her 2002 conviction was overturned by an appeals court because erroneous testimony may have influenced jurors.

Welner said he was not concerned that his exam came five years after the drownings because forensic psychiatrists always evaluate defendants at some point 'after the fact,' he said.

Yates - charged in just three of the children's deaths, a common practice in multiple slayings - has again pleaded innocent by reason of insanity. She faces life in prison if convicted.

Her attorneys say she suffered from severe postpartum psychosis when she drowned 6-month-old Mary, 2-year-old Luke, 3-year-old Paul, 5-year-old John and 7-year-old Noah.

They say she meets Texas' definition of insanity: that someone, because of a severe mental illness, does not know while committing a crime that it is wrong.

Published July 18, 2006

[From the Lansing State Journal]

Local news briefs

L. Holland won't face assault charge

MASON - A judge on Monday dismissed a domestic violence charge against Lisa Holland that stemmed from Tim Holland's claim in January that his wife slapped him. A trial was expected to begin Monday in 55th District Court before Judge Rosemarie Aquilina for the misdemeanor offense.

A prosecutor from Washtenaw County had been appointed to handle the case, since Ingham County is prosecuting the Hollands on charges they killed their son, Ricky. Without Tim Holland's testimony in the domestic violence case, the prosecution could not move forward. Lisa and Tim Holland will stand trial Sept. 11 on the murder charges.

Lisa Holland's co-counsel, Andrew Abood, said the domestic violence charge should have been Dismissed earlier. "They would have never gotten a conviction," he said.

Jul 18, 8:45 AM EDT

Domestic violence charge dropped against child-murder suspect

MASON, Mich. (AP) -- Lisa Holland still faces trial on charges of murdering her 7-year-old adopted son, but a domestic violence charge against her has been dropped after her husband refused to testify against her.

Lisa and Tim Holland are charged with felony murder and child abuse in the 2005 death of their adopted son Ricky. The couple's trial is set to start Sept. 11 before separate juries in Ingham County Circuit Court. Tim Holland, 37, and Lisa Holland, 34, have accused each other in the boy's death.

In January, Tim Holland accused Lisa Holland of slapping him, and she was charged with domestic violence. But he refused to testify against her, citing his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

On Monday's scheduled trial day in 55th District Court, Judge Rosemarie Aquilina dismissed the misdemeanor charge.

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Mental health funding at risk

Agency could lose millions a month if Wayne Co. doesn't give up control

July 18, 2006

BY ZACHARY GORCHOW
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

A surprising agreement between Democratic Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the Republican-controlled Legislature would reduce funds to the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency by \$3.5 million per month if the county government does not cede control of the agency to an independent authority by Dec. 1.

If the county converts the agency to an authority after Dec. 1, but before Sept. 30, 2007, it would recoup all lost funds.

The Legislature is expected to vote July 26 on sending the bill to Granholm's desk.

In the past, Granholm has blocked similar efforts by the Legislature to cut funds to the county's mental health agency. But her spokeswoman, Liz Boyd, said Thursday that the governor accepted the language as part of an agreement on the overall state budget.

"We've worked it out with state lawmakers," Boyd said.

Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano, however, said he won't be bullied into creating an authority and urged Granholm to veto the measure.

"I think the governor has to step up and veto it because it hurts the people of Wayne County and the City of Detroit, and it's punitive," he said.

At issue in creating an independent authority is control.

Under an authority, more than \$500 million in Medicaid grants from the state and federal governments would go directly to the authority instead of first going to the county, which critics say has diverted millions of dollars for other purposes.

Supporters say an authority would speed changes to help the 40,000 patients the agency sees annually, and allow more money to be spent on services, instead of on bureaucracy. The county has long resisted accepting an authority, but appeared close to doing so in the spring, when for the first time, it agreed to discuss the issue with the City of Detroit's representatives on the board that oversees the agency. The 12-member board consists of six appointees of Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and six people appointed by Ficano. At the same time, Wayne County Commission Chairwoman Jewel Ware created a task force that in May submitted a recommendation on what an authority should look like.

Ware, D-Detroit, said the Dec. 1 deadline seems fair. She said commission staff are reviewing the authority proposal, but could not say when the commission would vote on it.

But Ficano said Thursday that he won't concede to an authority simply because the state is cutting funding, because the county must gain control of the board in an authority scenario.

The county contributes \$17 million to the mental health system, while the city contributes nothing. And simply switching to an authority would fail to address the problems inherent with a split board, Ficano said.

"It's never preferable to lose the money, but if this is the budget they give us, then we'll reduce down," he said.

Ari Adler, spokesman for state Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, R-Wyoming, said the county should prioritize its residents over maintaining control of the agency.

"That's their decision to make whether they want to put this money and the people it serves at risk," he said.

Contact ZACHARY GORCHOW at 313-223-4536 or zgorchow@freepress.com.

Woman denies adult foster care violations

Saturday, July 15, 2006

By Nate Reens**The Grand Rapids Press**

CEDAR SPRINGS -- State officials are trying to revoke the adult foster care license of a Cedar Springs woman after investigators allegedly found 17 violations during two recent inspections.

Licensing consultant Arlene Smith's inspection reports claim Sharon Bishop, who has been licensed to care for up to six elderly and mentally ill residents since 1985, has illnesses that limit her movement and conditions that "would affect the ability of the Licensee to work with or around dependent adults."

Bishop, who cares for four people in her home, also allegedly intimidates the residents she is supposed to care for, requires them to perform household tasks they aren't capable of and fails to keep the home clean and safe, Smith said.

Bishop denies the allegations and plans to contest the revocation action. She has filed a rebuttal against the claims, which she calls "gross exaggerations" and may hire a lawyer.

"I've got some broad shoulders, but all this I really don't understand," Bishop said. "In my 21 years doing this, I've never been through anything like what this lady says I'm doing.

"I've had all kinds of people come through here and tell me what a good job I do and the people that work for me do."

Bishop acknowledges she has some health difficulties, but says she has employees to help her. The complaints that spurred the state's investigations come from former workers, she says.

Bishop's license was last renewed by the state in 2004.

Pantries to distribute food at St. Patrick's

Monday, July 17, 2006

FROM MUSKEGON CHRONICLE LOCAL REPORTS

Area food pantries and volunteers will distribute 7,500 pounds of fresh fruit, vegetables and other food Tuesday at St. Patrick's Church, 901 Columbus, Grand Haven.

The event starts 10 a.m. and the food is free for those in need. The food is provided by the Second Harvest Gleaners Food Bank of West Michigan and Love INC.

Visitors are asked to bring their own grocery bags.

For information, call Love INC at (616) 846-2701.

Published July 18, 2006

City Mission has fresh start

Renovations aid shelter in helping additional clients

By Jen Marckini
Lansing State Journal

Juan Moreno didn't know the Lansing City Rescue Mission existed in 2001, but now he can't imagine life without it.

"I had an alcohol problem," said Moreno who found himself homeless after a divorce in 2001.

"I came here, and I found peace in myself."

Today, he finds himself there again, after losing his apartment - this time because his employer has cut back on his hours.

"I know if I ever do fall back, this place will be here," Moreno said.

Moreno is one of the many people served by the City Rescue Mission, which recently opened its doors at the newly renovated downtown men's shelter facility.

The shelter on Michigan Avenue added 12 beds to their men's dorm, bringing the total to 36 beds.

Mark Criss, executive director of Rescue Mission, said the additional space was needed, as the area's homeless population grows.

"We see the demand increasing each year," he said.

On Monday, there were 32 guests staying at the men's downtown facility.

Inside the chapel doors, many of the men and woman join a noon prayer and service.

Just above their heads is a lounge area in the upper level for drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

Half of the clients are struggling with addictions.

The renovations, including the addition of a dozen beds to the facility, was part of a \$450,000 expansion project, which also included a new chapel, recreation area, restrooms and expanded shower facilities.

A central fire alarm system with sprinklers, in addition to making four of the contiguous buildings handicap accessible, was also part of the project.

Officials said the need for more beds is growing, especially among women and children.

The Mission's women's family ministry currently has 45 guests at the Cedar Street shelter.

The Bible-based program has been serving the Lansing area for 95 years and is funded through individual donations.

"If they're homeless, we'll get them on their feet," Criss said.

"We'll serve anybody, but we'll serve Christ with them."

Contact Jen Marckini at 267-1301 or jmarckini@lsj.com.

Son pleads guilty

Grand Rapids Press

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

REED CITY -- A former Osceola County man pleaded guilty Monday to causing his mother's 2004 death by leaving her buried in trash in a home that had no heat or running water, authorities said. Dennis Dell'eva, 52, used 74-year-old Estelle Dell'eva's Social Security checks to buy alcohol and rent movies, state Attorney General Mike Cox said earlier this year when he announced the woman's son was being prosecuted for the Jan. 19, 2004 death. The woman's son faces 15 years in prison at a later sentencing hearing.

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

A child is waiting

Teenager is as Precious as her name suggests

Rosemary Dorr / Special to The Detroit News

She's a typical 13-year-old in many ways. "I share stuff," Precious says. "I'm nice. I like to go swimming and go to the mall, go with my friends, talk on the phone, listen to music, dance and go places. I don't like to sit around."

She also enjoys going to the movies ("I like scary ones") and reading books ("About how people grow up"). Precious doesn't smile often, though.

"Precious totally missed having a childhood," notes her therapist at the residence where she has lived for six months. "She functions at a lower level and definitely needs help with academics."

"I like school," says Precious, a seventh-grader. "I like doing my work and getting on the computer."

"Precious is a very private girl who's been through a lot," adds her adoption worker. "She's still processing the death of her mother and finds it hard to trust people. She needs a family to be there for her. Whenever I see her, she asks, 'Have you found a family for me?'"

She's hoping to find a patient, understanding family that will be there for Precious, setting clear and consistent boundaries and allowing her to maintain contact with the sisters to whom she's attached. Please consider adoption and talk with Deanna Badiru at Lutheran Adoption Service, (248) 423-2770, ext. 1135.

Last column's children: Danielle, 10, and Codey, 7, are active, playful and friendly sisters who need stability. For information, call Kim Williams at Wayne County Department of Human Services, (313) 396-0239.

A Child is Waiting appears in Features.

Unger sentencing in wife's murder moved to Manistee

7/18/2006, 10:15 a.m. ET

The Associated Press

MANISTEE, Mich. (AP) — Sentencing for Mark Unger, a suburban Detroit resident convicted of first-degree murder in the death of his estranged wife at a northern Michigan resort in 2003, has been moved from Beulah because of a power outage.

Unger, 45, of Huntington Woods, was scheduled to be sentenced Tuesday morning by Benzie County Circuit Judge James Batzer. But the hearing was moved to Manistee County Circuit Court in Manistee and reset for Tuesday afternoon.

Thunderstorms that began late Monday dumped as much as 2 inches of rain on parts of the state's Lower Peninsula and knocked out electrical service to at least 290,000 utility customers, officials say.

A jury last month convicted Unger of first-degree murder, which in Michigan carries a mandatory term of life without parole.

Prosecutors say Unger pushed Florence Unger, 37, from a boathouse rooftop deck the night of Oct. 24, 2003. She fell 12 feet to a concrete apron and her body was found the next morning at the shallow edge of Lower Herring Lake.

A lawyer for Mark Unger has promised to appeal.

Mich. child welfare agency pushed Prosecutor, judge tell committee investigating Ricky's death that new department is necessary

Karen Bouffard / The Detroit News

WATERFORD TOWNSHIP -- Two top Oakland County law enforcement officials blasted Michigan's child welfare system Thursday and urged lawmakers to create a new department to safeguard kids.

Judge James Alexander, presiding judge in the Family Division of Oakland Circuit Court, and Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Deb Carley testified at a hearing in Waterford of a special legislative committee investigating the death of 7-year-old Ricky Holland of Williamston.

The state Department of Human Services, which oversees welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, adult protective services and other programs, is too big to concentrate on children, Alexander said.

"We need a department totally focused on child welfare," Alexander said. "Workers who do these jobs need to be focused completely on children."

Jim Nye, director of field operations for the Human Services Department, said Michigan has made many improvements in protecting children.

In the past three years, reforms have been implemented, including speedier criminal background checks on caregivers and a 24-hour turnaround on investigating complaints of abuse of children 3 years or younger, Nye said.

The state has been criticized for ignoring complaints of child abuse in Ricky's case. Tim and Lisa Holland will face a murder trial in September. Testimony in their preliminary examination revealed state workers received multiple complaints that Ricky, adopted by the Hollands, was being abused. All of the complaints were determined to be unsubstantiated. Workers often fail to identify abuse when it occurs, either because they don't have the skills to detect it or they don't take enough time to look, Carley said.

"If a worker says, 'Did you molest your child?' and they say 'no,' then the case is closed," Carley said. "What they say is that this case is unsubstantiated, (but) unsubstantiated does not mean it didn't happen. That's a problem we deal with every day, and it's a problem in every county in this state. I had a case this year with more than 50 unsubstantiated complaints."

The court officials said the state's massive bureaucracy has too few workers, and they are overwhelmed by paperwork and insufficiently trained to handle complex child abuse cases. Carley said records of state investigations into abuse should be open for public scrutiny.

"The greatest injustice done to Ricky Holland was that no one could read every piece of paper on that case," Carley said, noting the prosecutor's office routinely struggles to view state records needed for criminal investigations. "Every case investigated by the department should be open for review."

Prosecutor, judge call for statewide child welfare agency

WOOD-TV 8

Monday, July 17, 2006

WATERFORD TOWNSHIP, Mich. A special legislative committee investigating the death of a seven-year-old Lansing-area boy has heard from legal officials in Oakland County.

A family court judge and a prosecutor testified yesterday that Michigan should create a new agency whose only responsibility is to safeguard children.

They say the Department of Human Services' Child Protective Services division failed to protect Ricky Holland from years of abuse leading up to his death.

Ricky's adoptive parents, Lisa and Tim Holland of Williamston, are charged with murdering him last summer.

The hearing was held in Waterford Township.